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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
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МЕЖДУНАРОДНАЯ АМНИСТИЯ
منظمة العفو الدولية
國際特赦組織

URGENT ACTION

EXTERNAL **AI Index: ASA 21/80/96**

UA 275/96 **Fear of torture / Possible prisoners of conscience** **26 November 1996**

EAST TIMOR **Two youths (names unknown)**

Two unidentified East Timorese have been arrested following a peaceful pro-independence demonstration in Dili, the capital of East Timor, on 25 November 1996. Amnesty International fears that the two, whom it believes may have been arrested solely for the peaceful expression of their views, are at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

At least 400 youths are reported to have taken part in the demonstration in front of the Roman Catholic diocese building in Dili. According to reports the demonstrators carried banners and shouted pro-independence slogans but did not engage in violence. The two youths were arrested by the police, but it is not known where they are being held.

Torture and ill-treatment of political prisoners in East Timor is routine. Prisoners are frequently denied access to lawyers and to members of their family, increasing the risk of such treatment.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Indonesian authorities commonly respond to demonstrations with arbitrary detention, including the detention of peaceful protesters, beatings, torture and, in some cases, extrajudicial executions. At least 150 people were arrested after disturbances in Baucau in June. Most were released shortly afterwards, but 21 were subsequently tried and sentenced to terms of imprisonment of up to four and half years.

The tension has risen in East Timor in recent weeks as demonstrations have taken place to commemorate the 12 November 1991 Santa Cruz massacre and in support of Noble Peace Prize winner, Bishop Belo, who has been criticised by the authorities for an interview published in the German magazine, *Der Spiegel*. Most of the protests have been peaceful, although some have also involved stone-throwing. Until the 25 November protest there are not believed to have been any arrests.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/express/airmail letters in Bahasa Indonesia, English or your own language:
- urging the authorities to provide information on the names, whereabouts and exact charges against the two people arrested after the pro-independence demonstration of 25 November;
- calling for all possible measures to be taken to ensure the safety of the detainees, including allowing them access to the International Committee of the Red Cross, lawyers and their families;
- calling for the immediate and unconditional release of the two detainees, unless they are charged with recognisably criminal offences under existing laws.

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APPEALS TO:

CHIEF OF POLICE FOR EAST TIMOR
Lt. Col.Mucharam
Kapolda Timor Timur
Dili, East Timor
(Indonesia)
Telegrams: Kapolda Timor Timur, Dili, East Timor
Salutation: Dear Lt. Col. Mucharam

GOVERNOR OF EAST TIMOR
Abilio Jose Osario Soares
Gubernur KDH Tk. 1 Timor Timor
Jl Infante De Hendrique
Dili, East Timor
(Indonesia)
Telegrams: Gubernur KDH Tk.1 Timor Timur, Dili, East Timor
Salutation: Dear Governor Soares

COPIES TO:

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
Alex Refialy S.H.
Jalan Dr Antonio de Carvalho
Dili
East Timor
(Indonesia)

and to diplomatic representatives of Indonesia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 31 December 1996.